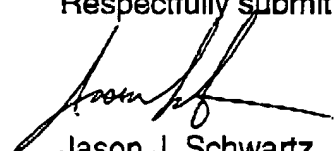


It is asserted in the Action that the marked-up copy of the claims fails to show all the changes relative to the previous version of the claims (citing claim 7 in particular) and, consequently, the reply filed March 2, 2002 in Paper No. 26 (applicant believes the Examiner is referring to the reply mailed March 5, 2002) was not fully responsive to the prior Office Action.

After reviewing the pending claims, applicant's attorney telephoned Examiner Rawlings today (July 8, 2002) for clarification of the objection, as no similar problems were found with any of the pending claims other than claim 7. Examiner Rawlings indicated that only claim 7 must be amended. Claim 7 has been properly amended to show all changes relative to the previous version of the claim. As this response is believed to correct any asserted deficiencies in the response mailed March 5, 2002 (Paper No. 26), withdrawal of the pending objection and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing discussion, it is believed that claims 1, 5 and 7-11 are in condition for immediate allowance. Action towards this end is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney regarding any issues that may be handled in that fashion.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason J. Schwartz
Registration No. 43,910

HALE AND DORR LLP
1455 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004-1008
(202) 942-8490
Date: July 8, 2002

APPENDIX 1

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 7 as follows:

7. (Thrice Amended) A method as in claim 1, wherein the tissues or cells are thought to be metaplastic.

APPENDIX 2

1. A method for diagnosing dysplasia, pre-cancer or cancer *in situ* in biological tissue or cells of a living organism, comprising:

- a) applying to the tissue or cells *in situ* a dye selected from the group consisting of methylene blue and toluidine blue O;
- b) removing excess dye from the tissue or cells;
- c) generating a reflected light spectrum from the tissue or cells by illuminating the stained tissue or cells with light;
- d) directing the reflected light spectrum to a spectrometer;
- e) comparing the degree of the metachromatic shift of the dye from the reflected light spectrum of the stained tissue or cells with the degree of the metachromatic shift of the dye from a library of previously obtained spectra of similarly stained tissue or cells; and
- f) correlating the reflected light spectrum with a disease state, whereby an *in situ* diagnosis of dysplasia, pre-cancer or cancer is made.

5. A method as in claim 1, wherein said comparing comprises the use of a digital microprocessor.

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7. (Thrice Amended) A method as in claim 1, wherein the tissues or cells are thought to be metaplastic.

8. A method as in claim 1, wherein the spectrometer is able to measure light for a range of or some part of a range of wavelength from 200 to 1100 nanometers.

9. A method as in claim 1, wherein the reflected light spectrum is measured and recorded, and said measuring comprises the use of a photometer and one or more light filters.

10. A method as in claim 1, wherein the tissues or cells are from at least one organ selected from the group consisting of skin, cervix, vagina, mouth, colon, esophagus and internal organs.

11. A method as in claim 1, wherein, prior to said comparing step, a reflected light spectrum from unstained tissue or cells is subtracted from the spectrum of the stained tissue or cells.